

„The request of the defense for the discontinuance of the trial and the self-liquidation of the tribunal cannot be considered, as the tribunal was fully conscious of the significance of its action in admitting the workers' delegations to the proceedings“.

The defense insisted upon its demand, supporting itself upon the legal code of Soviet Russia, which regulates fully the presence of outsiders in court proceedings, and which clearly provides that whatever the grounds offered in an appeal may be, „the verdict must positively be annulled in all instance of admission into the case of persons not involved by the juridical provisions of court proceedings“, i. e. of all persons „outside of members of the court, the accused, counsel and prosecutors, witnesses, experts, and in all cases of admission in the course of the court proceedings of persons not provided for by juridical procedure and who have had or may have had any influence upon the nature of the verdict“.

The text is quite clear. The appearance of delegations at the trial and the exchange of speeches between them and court, as was pointed out by the „Socialistichesky Viestnik“, constituted precisely a violation such as is guarded against by the law and „which might have had an influence upon the nature of the verdict“. So that from a purely juridical point of view the verdict of the Supreme Tribunal was liable to positive annulment from the very beginning.

But the Bolsheviki attach no more importance to their laws than they do to their promises and obligations. The court simply laughed at the protest of counsel and their references to the law, whereupon Muravioff, stirred with ire, shouted:

„Woe to the country, woe to the people who have no respect for their law and who laugh at those who defend the law“.

In reply the judges ordered Muravioff's indictment for contempt of court!

It was then that the attorneys for the defense, following a conference with the accused, announced that they could no longer take part in the proceedings, to

which the court replied with the following statement, published in the entire Soviet press. This product of the creative genius of Soviet judges follows:

„The request for its self-liquidation submitted by the defense to the present court can be explained only by the complete ignorance of Counsel Muravioff and his total misconception of the court's juridical nature. The Supreme Tribunal was fully conscious of its act in admitting the workers' delegation into the courtroom and in its own participation in the demonstration of June 20. The action of the court was in no way accidental but was taken in full consciousness and in complete understanding of its nature.

The argument of counsel Muravioff that the court can render its verdict only if it remains within a glass case can be explained only by the blindness of bourgeois thought. Judges are human beings and it is impossible to isolate them from public life. The important thing in this case is not what had actually occurred but how the court reacted toward it. The court believes that much that was said here on June 20 was not true, but it is possible that some of it was true. It was important for the court to establish only two facts, which were evidenced by the workers' delegation: 1. that the working masses support the Soviet Government and 2. that the court is acting not in isolation from the working masses but in an atmosphere of confidence and support on the part of these masses. That is why the president of the court declared that the declaration made by the demonstrators was of value to us.

„So far as the complaint of the defense against the insults hurled by the demonstrators against the accused is concerned, the court declares that these workers did not go through any law college and do not know the laws of etiquette, and for this reason permitted themselves to use expressions which should not have been used in the courtroom. Because of these considerations, the court regards it as inadmissible to pick on' the rough language that came from the workers' lips.

„Concerning the impartiality of the court, the tribunal declared on the very first day that it laughs at the hypocritical assertion of bourgeois countries that a court must stand above classes and should render verdicts of some sort of unearthly impartiality. Counsel Muravioff may, therefore, succeed in discrediting the verdict of the proletarian class court in any other country but not in the state of the workers and peasants. The court therefore refuses to consider the declaration of the defense and suggests that in case of its dissatisfaction with the court's actions to direct its complaints to the people's commissary of justice or to the praesidium of the Central Executive Committee. (These lofty institutions have already examined the declarations of the defense. Muravioff, Tager and Zehdanoff have been ordered exiled to distant parts of Russia).

This document requires no comment.

And so, the defense was compelled to withdraw from the case. On June 23, the accused were left alone face to face with their executioners. On the same day, Gendelman made the following declaration to the court, in the name of all his comrades:

„From the very first day of the trial, the lawful demands of our counsel have been invariably rejected by the court and have provoked it to ironic comment. The court's behaviour has compelled first our foreign counsel to withdraw from trial. They have been subjected to slanderous persecution everywhere and at all moments. Not even this high institution, called the Supreme Revolutionary Tribunal, could protect them from insults and ridicule by the 'public' commanded to attend the trial or on the part of the members of the court and the prosecution. Yesterday, the Russian members of the defense were also compelled to abandon their task because of the open violation of the revolutionary law by its own guardians.

„Under these circumstances it would hardly be proper to call this a court. Its members and the members of the prosecution appear at public meetings arranged by the Communist Party during intermissions, where they discuss the opi-

nions and impressions they have formed in the course of the trial. And if we still remain here, instead of demanding our return to jail, we do so in order to prove to the authors of this trial that we do not fear it.

„The participation of members of the court at the meeting where a resolution was adopted demanding the highest measure of punishment for us, i. e. the death penalty, forces us to conclude that our judges are in full solidarity with those leaders and organizers of the government's demonstration who terrorized the workers into approval of the resolution of which the government was in such great need. It is known to us that wholesale arrests in plants and factories preceded the demonstration and meeting on June 20“.

The president interrupted at this point:

„The tribunal will neither deny nor affirm the fact of its participation at the meeting, but requests proof of the arrests of workmen and their compulsory attendance at the demonstration“.

Gendelman replied:

„Wholesale arrests took place at the Prochoroff, Nosoff, Kiaboff and Ranenberg plants, in the railway repair shops and others, the workers being informed also that their failure to appear at the demonstration would be regarded as proof of their solidarity with the Socialists-Revolutionists. Before departing for the demonstration the workers at every plant and factory were checked off by lists“.

The president again interrupts Gendelman, who pointing to leaflets in the hands of some of the public in the courtroom declares:

„I have always avoided hearsay assertions. I ask the court to examine the declaration of the Moscow workers, protesting against the misuse of their name in the resolution of June 20“.

The president asks Gendelman:

„Have you nothing else to add?“

Gendelman: — „It seems to me it would be difficult to add anything to what has already been pointed out — and thus everything is clear“.

Yes, everything was clear. The „trial“ continued.

VII.

What they were accused of

Vandervelde summed up the political and juridical substance of the Moscow trial in the following words:

„The Bolsheviki brought four indictments against the Socialists-Revolutionists:

„1. The Socialists-Revolutionists defended the Provisional Government with arms in their hands.

„The Socialists-Revolutionists admit this fact and are proud of it.

„2. The Socialists-Revolutionists, with arms in their hands, defended the Constituent Assembly.

„The Socialists-Revolutionists admit this fact and are only sorry that they did not succeed in carrying this to a successful conclusion.

„3. The Socialists-Revolutionists waged an armed struggle against the Soviet Government.

„The Socialists-Revolutionists admit this as an undeniable, historic fact. But all these three accusations must be ruled out of court for the Soviet Government had issued an amnesty covering all these actions and even legalized the Socialist-Revolutionary Party.

„4. The Socialists-Revolutionists took part in Volodarsky's assassination and in the assault on Lenine.

„There is not a shred of evidence nor a single witness to support this charge, — except the confessions of the provocateurs Semionoff and Konopliowa, whom nobody believes“.

The first three accusations concern the participation of the party of Socialists-Revolutionists in the civil war, covering the period from the end of 1917 to the beginning of 1919.

This civil war was begun by the Bolsheviki who, in October, 1917, seized power by means of a conspiracy, dissolved the Constituent Assembly and rejected all proposals of the Socialist parties for a united Socialist front. The entire responsibility for the blood of peasants and workers shed in this war falls, therefore, upon the Bolsheviki.

The memory of the Bolsheviki is not so short that they have forgotten how Lenine, as early as in April, 1917, summoned the workers to civil war.. This was his first word on crossing the Russian frontier. The Bolsheviki remember very well how their trucks filled with armed men moved up and down the streets of Petrograd, in July of the same year, with guns and banners proclaiming: „Long live the Civil War!“ They remember the efforts made at that time by the Socialists-Revolutionists and Mensheviki to save the unity of the democracy, in order to avert fratricidal strife within its midst. What right, therefore, have these gentlemen at this time to accuse the Socialists-Revolutionists that in participating in the civil war they defended the Provisional Government and the Constituent Assembly?

One may estimate as he please the policy of the Provisional Government during the first period of the Russian Revolution. One may or may not criticize its basic idea of the coalition of Socialists with bourgeois-democratic elements. But there can be no doubt on one point: that the party which delegated its members into the government not only had a right but was duty bound to defend that government against the attacks of conspirators and „putsch“ heroes, such as were the Bolsheviki, who had behind them bayonets but not the majority of the people.

There may, likewise, be more than one opinion on the principles of democracy and the Constituent Assembly, which is the expression of these principles. But it is clear, that a party standing on the platform of democracy, and which has received by popular election a majority of votes, was duty bound to use all means at its command in defense of the Constituent Assembly against violent encroachments upon its sovereign rights.

The civil war and the Volga front were nothing else than a continuation of the defense of the Constituent Assembly, the defense which the Bolsheviki had broken so easily in January. And, again, there may be difference of opinion on the policy of the Socialists-Revolutionists at that period; one may condemn the line followed at that time by individual members of the party delegated by the party into the government that was directing the struggle on the Volga front and

in Siberia, the so-called „Directorate“ (afterwards overthrown by Kolchak conspirators). But this is a question subject to political or historic criticism but which cannot be transformed into the juridical question of the legal responsibility for this policy of a party defending, in the course of civil war, the idea of democracy against a party that initiated this war in the name of the establishment and preservation of its dictatorship.

From the juridical point of view this question lost all actuality after the abandonment by the Socialist-Revolutionist Party of its armed struggle against the Soviet Government, — a step approved fully by the party conference in February, 1919, and followed by the amnesty granted by the Bolshevist Government to all members of the party who had participated in the civil war.

Shortly after this the party was legalized and was even permitted to publish its organ in Moscow.

To be sure, this organ was suppressed after the tenth issue and wholesale arrests of its members were resumed two weeks after the legalization of the party. To be sure, the party was again compelled to return to underground activity, but for two and a half years it remained uncontested that the amnesty granted by the Soviet Government excluded all possibility of legal prosecution for acts covered by this amnesty act.

But now, in 1922, the Bolshevist tribunal has revived these old questions. The victors in the civil war, the usurpers of power, are trying as rebels those people who four and a half years ago sought to defend against violence the elected representatives of the people. They are being tried in violation of soviet law itself, in violation of the Soviet Government's own oath, — for an act amnesty is tantamount to a law and a promise.

The Bolsheviki themselves apparently felt the weakness of the case, but the Soviet jurists found a way out of the situation by inserting into the indictment against the Socialists-Revolutionists the following argument:

„The members of the Central Committee of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists directed the par-

Un groupe d'accusés avec leur défenseurs.

Die Angeklagten mit ihren Verteidigern.



En haut: 1. M. Védéniapine. 2. N. Artemiev. 3. N. Jdanov (avocat).
4. M. Lvov. 5. A. Wauters (avocat). 6. E. Timofeev. 7. K. Rosenfeld (avocat).
8. P. Zlobin. — En bas: 1. D. Donskoï. 2. E. Ratner. 3. Vandervelde (avocat).
4. A. Gotz.



En haut: 1. D. Rakov. 2. D. Donskoï. 3. F. Fedorovitch. 4. A. Lieberov.
5. N. Jdanov (avocat). 6. Th. Liebknecht (avocat). 7. S. Morosov. 8. L. Rosenthal
(traducteur). 9. E. Berg. 10. A. Tagher (avocat). 11. C. Rosenfeld (avocat). —
Au milieu: 1. L. Guerstein. 2. M. Likhatch. 3. E. Timofeev. 4. E. Ratner.
5. A. Gotz. 6. G. Gorkov. — En bas: 1. P. Zlobin. 2. M. Lvoïf. 3. W. Agapov.
4. B. Outgoff.

(Fortsetzung vom vorhergehenden Bildblatt — Voir au verso de la page illustrée précédente)

Standing as prisoners before this Court, we have done more for the sake of our party, we have accomplished more towards revealing the true nature of your dictatorship in the eyes of working classes at home and abroad, than we could possibly do if we enjoyed liberty; through Death we shall gain more for the common cause, than if we remained alive.

From the very moment we fell into your hands we expected nothing else but a death warrant. We don't care whether you amnesty us or not. But from this bench you will never hear a request for pardon.

Gendelman

Для дѣла нашей партіи, для разоблаченія вашей диктатуры въ глазахъ русскаго и международнаго рабочаго класса, для дѣла социализма и революціи мы, плѣнные, этимъ процессомъ сдѣлали больше, чѣмъ если бы находились на волѣ; а мертвые сдѣлаемъ больше, чѣмъ могли бѣ сдѣлать живые. . . .

Съ того момента, какъ мы попали въ ваши руки, мы были увѣрены въ томъ, что вы намъ вынесете смертный приговоръ. Для насъ безразлично, амнистируете ли вы насъ или нѣтъ. Но съ этихъ скамей просьбы о помилованіи вы не услышите. . . .

Гендельманъ

Pro věc naší strany, pro odhalení vaší diktatury před očima ruské a mezinárodní dělnické třídy, pro věc socialismu a revoluce my, zajatci, tímto procesem jsme udělali více než kdybychom byli na svobodě; a smrti uděláme více, nežbychom mohli udělati jsouce živi.

Od okamžiku, kdy jsme padli do vašich rukou, byli jsme přesvědčeni, že nás odsoudíte k smrti. Je nám lhostejno, zdali nás budete amnestovatí nebo ne. Z těchto lavic prosby o milosti neuslyšíte. . .

Gendelman

ty's counter-revolutionary activity, in preparation for the overthrow of the Soviet Government, both before the amnesty of 1919 as well as after the said amnesty, which thus, in accordance with the idea of the amnesty, renders it inapplicable to them."

A fair estimate of the authors of this argument was given by Martoff in the „Sozialistichesky Viestnik“:

„The Jesuit Fathers are indeed pupps and youngsters in comparison with the Communist casuists. We can readily imagine the explosion of protest that would sweep the Third Internationale if some bourgeois government attempted to interpret an amnesty granted by it to Communists in the sense that it was to be applied only to those of them who on their release would not resume their former struggle against the bourgeoisie! Not even the Czarist government, in granting us amnesty in October, 1905, dared to send us back to jail in punishment for old „crimes“ because we have committed new ones“.

The defendants in the Moscow trial themselves did not, however, resort to this pointed and powerful argument. In accordance with the political character of the trial, as they regarded it, they did not care to employ formal, juridical arguments in repulsing the attacks upon them but preferred, instead, to base their defense upon devotion to their revolutionary duty.

Thus Gotz, in reply to the president's question as to whether he had anything to add to the bill of indictment, said:

„As member of the Central Committee of the party which sent its members into the Government, duty bound to support that government and being always well-informed of the government's moves, I take upon myself entire responsibility for our armed resistance in October, 1917. There was no other way open for the Central Committee, especially because our political opponents had at that period of the struggle between us raised the slogan ‚peace at any price‘.

„After the October coup d'etat, we considered it our bounden duty to our country to wage armed resistance against the usurpers of power, who signed the Brest-Litovsk peace and were ready to accept other compromises leading to the

enslavement of the Russian people, who had just thrown off the fetters of Czarist rule“.

This stand of the defendants rendered the prosecution's efforts to „expose“ the struggle of the Socialists-Revolutionists against the Soviet Government both pitiful and useless. For this reason, the Kremlin prosecution transferred its attention from the general question of the civil war to the particular question of the relations between the Socialists-Revolutionists with foreign missions during the civil war.

The reply to this accusation was given by Timofeyeff in his discussion of the bill of indictment:

„The accusation brought against us regarding our relations with foreign powers and our receipt of military and financial assistance from them in 1917 should be addressed to the Provisional Government, recognized by all the people of Russia, and into which members of our party entered. This government stood for the preservation of our treaty obligations and other understandings with the Allies, and the members of our party, forming part of that government, regarded it as their highest obligation to preserve the honor of the Russian people and the life interests of Russia. They regarded Russia's continued participation in the war as essential, and in basing their program upon Socialist ideas of peace they hoped to wrest at the future peace conference conditions of peace acceptable to Russia. The Brest-Litovsk treaty, concluded in 1918, made continued cooperation with the Allies for salvation of our country from German imperialism, supported by the Soviet government, doubly essential. Our relations with the Allies continued up to the German revolution.“

The testimony of witnesses brought before the court corroborated this declaration of the accused in every way.

The only support left to the prosecution on this point were the oral assertions of the traitors and turncoats. These could not, however, state a single fact and simply referred to each other as the source of their information.

No less than thirty sessions were devoted by the court in its efforts to prove the Socialists-Revolutionists guilty of terroristic acts against the Soviet government. The concrete cases discussed were Volodarsky's assassination, June 20, 1918, and the attack on Lenine.

Regarding the first of these terroristic acts it was fully established that the murder was committed by the worker Sergeyeff, of the Semionovsky detachment, and that the Central Executive Committee of the party not only did not sanction the act but condemned it in the sharpest possible terms.

The attack on Lenine was committed without the knowledge of the party, by the emotional Dora Kaplan, formerly an anarchist, who joined the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists almost on the eve of her act, driven to desperation by the spectacle of Bolshevik savagery and dreaming of liberating the Russian people from the yoke of dictatorship by her self-sacrifice. The Bolshevik's reply to the shot fired by Dora Kaplan was wholesale murder of hostages. Thousands of perfectly innocent people were murdered and savagely tortured to death.

But this mountain of corpses did not satisfy the Bolshevik leaders and four years later they raised the question of the responsibility of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists for the fatal shot fired by Dora Kaplan.

They could not, of course, show the party's direct connection with this act. Instead, they resorted to insinuations: the party had raised the question of terrorism, it sympathized with terroristic acts, it was inclined to launch a terroristic campaign.

At the very beginning of the trial Gotz declared:

„I deny emphatically the accusations brought against me, as member of the Central Committee, with regard to our sanction of individual acts of terrorism committed against the leaders of our political foes by individual members of our party. I deny the accusation as utterly baseless, unsupported by concrete data and founded entirely upon the statements of former members of our party on their admission to the Communist Party. Such terroristic acts were in sharp contradiction with the policy of the Central Committee.“

On the point of the Party's discussion of the question of terroristic action, Timofeyeff made the following statement:

„The question of terrorism was first raised in the Central Committee in the middle of January, 1918, but was taken off the agenda by an absolute majority. This was repeated a second time. The question was raised for the second time in

January, and for the third time in June, in Moscow, but was decided in the negative by the same absolute majority."

But why was this question repeatedly raised before the party? Because there were among its membership some unbalanced and emotional characters who proved good instruments for the machinations of provocateurs.

The testimony of witnesses proved conclusively that Semionoff and Konopliowa were behind these terroristic plans and that these provocateurs, with the aid of the recruits they had enlisted and deceived without the knowledge of the party's centre, committed those acts the responsibility for which the Bolsheviki sought to place upon the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists. This proved the decisive blow to the chief point of the indictment.

The Bolsheviki then raised another accusation against the defendants. They undertook to try them for the actions of the so-called „Nonpartisan Union“ in Paris.

The Bolsheviki based this new accusation upon documents stolen by monarchists from the archives of the so-called „Administrative Centre“ of that organization. When Prosecutor Krylenko raised before the court the question of admitting this material to the proceedings, Gotz speaking in the name of all the defendants declared:

„We, the accused, members of the Central Committee, have repeatedly declared to the court that we assume full responsibility for the acts of all groups of our party insofar as these acts took place in Russia. We likewise assume all responsibility for the actions of our foreign delegation at the present time. With regard to the new documents submitted against us, documents of dubious origin, allegedly illuminating the activity of alleged groups alleged to have acted abroad in the name of our party and who, in the opinion of the state prosecutor, were closely connected with our work, we declare that we cannot and will not accept responsibility for actions unknown to us, committed by persons likewise unknown to us. We, therefore, request that these documents be stricken from the record, as material having no direct connection with the indictment against us.“

The court declined this request. The documents were admitted into the case and the tribunal, deserting the question

of what Gotz, Timofeyeff and the other defendants did in Russia, took up the question of what certain third persons did in Paris at the time when the defendants were kept in jail.

Gotz then addressed another declaration to the court:

„The first group of defendants has delegated me to inform the court that we decline to participate in the discussion of the new documents and to request the court's permission to excuse us from attending the proceedings during the reading and discussion of these documents.“

This request of the defendants was granted. They were permitted to leave the room and the judges proceeded to examine the Paris documents without them.

What are these documents? What was the „Nonpartisan Union“? What did the Moscow prisoners of the Soviet Government have to do with it?

These questions are answered in the declaration of the foreign delegation of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists, June 14, 1922:

„With the assistance of monarchists, the Bolsheviki have stolen some documents from the Paris archive of the Administrative Centre of the Nonpartisan Union. Several days after the theft, Krylenko presented part of these documents to the revolutionary tribunal, with the request that they be admitted into the case of the Central Committee of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists. The Bolshevist court, regardless of the protests of the defendants, granted the request.

The foreign delegation of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists declares:

„1. Not a single member of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists now on trial in Moscow belonged to the Non-Partisan Union.

„2. During the entire period of the union's activity (1920—21) the defendants were in prison.

„3. The union's activity was confined entirely abroad and as indicated a year ago in the Administrative Centre's declaration in the „Volia Rossii“, consisted in helping to bring about the union of all forces of the revolutionary democracy, in the establishment and support of press or-

gans the purpose of which was to fight intervention and oppose both red and white dictatorship, and to keep European public opinion informed along the line of these aims.

„4. Individual members of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists residing abroad were members of this union and cooperated in such publications as „Volia Rossii“ and „Pour la Russie“, established or supported by the union, and which, while not party organs, did not in any way differ with the general political sentiments of the party.

„5. The Administrative Centre of this nonpartisan organization was in no way connected with any of the party's centres and acted entirely outside the control of the party, which cannot, therefore, assume any political responsibility for its actions.

„6. The effort to „incriminate“ the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists in the organization of uprisings, on the basis of correspondence stolen from the Nonpartisan Union, an organization operating abroad, (to say nothing of the criminal method used in obtaining these documents for the prosecution or the stupidity of the attempt to establish a connection between an organization of that type and local uprisings in Russia) simply manifests the helplessness of the Bolshevik prosecutors in trying to find sufficient material to support their preconceived verdict.

„The Party of Socialists-Revolutionists does not intend to shirk historic and political responsibility for the entire struggle it waged and still wages against bolshevist and white guard dictatorship, not excluding the period when it resorted to arms in defense of democracy. But it hurls back with contempt the cheap effort to put upon it the responsibility for actions in which it neither took nor takes any part.“

I am not going to enter here into analysis of the documents stolen from the Paris archive. I will not attempt to discuss the activity of the „Nonpartisan Union“. I am not speaking here of the merits of this or that doctrine, of this of that policy, but of the Twelve Who Are To Die. For can there be

more than one opinion about a court that rendered a death verdict against them for the actions of an organization of which they were not members, of which they knew only by hearsay and upon which they could exercise no influence whatever!

But in order to appreciate fully this phase of the Moscow trial, it must be remembered that the persons who were being tried had long before the trial declared openly and emphatically their opposition to the tendencies of the Paris „Nonpartisan Union“ and its auxiliary, the Conference of Members of the Constituent Assembly. I have in mind the „Letter to Comrades Abroad“, which appeared in Nos. 14—15 of „Revoluzionnaya Rossia“ (November-December 1921), and signed by Timofeyeff, Gendelman, Gotz, Donskoy, B. Ivanoff, Lichatch, Rakoff, Eugenia Ratner and the others.

The letter follows:

„What should be the chief aim of the representatives of the party abroad? They should aim to make the struggle conducted by our party, as a Socialist and revolutionary party, in Russia, coincide with the struggle waged by the international working class. They should aim, on one side, to familiarize European Socialist opinion with the experience of the Russian Socialist parties, with their mistakes, their defeats, their victories, and, on the other, to internationalize our struggle against the dictatorship of the Bolshevist party, to rivet the attention of the working classes of all countries upon this struggle, to assist the efforts of our organizations fighting under indescribably difficult conditions by attracting the moral and intellectual sympathy of the international working class. The comrades abroad must devote all their attention to this task, for they must remember at all times that our party is but one of the detachments of the international working class. And from this point of view we reject most emphatically the „imperialist“ policy with which some of the comrades abroad are infatuated. No matter how broad the perspectives of the party may appear in the future or how luring the vistas arising in the imagination of some of the individual leaders, — we must never forget our present, alas, so modest. There

must be no place for illusions and self — deceptions. For what confronts us today, on one side, is a battered, mercilessly persecuted party, driven underground, and, on the other, the shattered, weary bleeding masses of the people. This is the reality of things. Under such conditions it would be a grave mistake to distract the party from the only right task before it of organizing, training and disciplining the masses, as part of the process of the political struggle against the dictatorship of the Soviet Government — a task in which all the active elements of the party in Russia are engaged.

„In this struggle the Russian Socialist parties, the parties of the Russian toiling masses, have but one ally in Europe and America, — the international working class. And it is in this direction that our comrades abroad should devote all their efforts. All short cuts leading in the direction of European governments, and of so-called „influential“ circles, being made by individual comrades, supporting themselves either on the authority arising out of their activity in the past, or on the hopes that may be laid by some Western European circles and governments upon the Socialist-Revolutionary Party in the future, will not only fail to ease the burden of the struggle against the Bolshevik dictatorship, placed by history upon the shoulders of our party, but on the contrary, will make the situation worse confounded, lead us off on a tangent, set the European Socialist parties and the broad masses of the people against us and thus make more difficult the sufficiently hard struggle against the Bolshevik rule. The isolation of Bolshevism from the international Socialist movement should be the first and fundamental aim of the party's representatives abroad. The policy of some of you, however, can lead only to the isolation of the party from the international labor movement. If the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists is destined again, in response to the will of the people, to take the lead in the Russian Revolution, it will, when that time comes, be in a position, by means of its governmental authority, to establish such relations with the governments of Western Europe as will correspond to the in-

terests of the state and the people. But to anticipate coming events is useless so far as the future is concerned and highly injurious for the present, for it detracts the comrades, we repeat, from the only task before us — the establishment of close concrete and intellectual relations between the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists and the international working class.

„This substitution of fictitious attempts to „influence“ European governments for regular, revolutionary party work abroad must also be emphasized as highly detrimental with regard to another question which troubles the minds of the comrades in Russia: the question of the so-called Paris Conference. The party indicated quite clearly its attitude on this question at its Xth congress and condemned unequivocally this entire enterprise as the baseless venture of a group of individuals acting on their own initiative, delegated by no one to do so, representing and supporting themselves upon nobody. The fact alone that on this question the party unanimously disowned so many of its former tried leaders and did not hesitate disavow their acts and policy before the Socialist public opinion of Europe should have sufficed to make the authors of this unfortunate enterprise realize the extent to which their venture contradicted the whole policy of the party and damaged the interests of the revolution. It is not the fear of demagogic criticism by the Bolshevik press — as some of you were inclined to believe — but deep consciousness of the grave danger this venture held out to the party as a whole, in the policy which it is now working out, which forms the sole motive actuating all members of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists now at work in Russia, as well as its leading representative bodies, in their unanimous and emphatic demand that the comrades abroad abandon the Parisian venture. If on one scale we put the mythical political advantages arising out of coalition or cooperation with Miliukoff, who, according to your own declaration, is but a „pittiful fragment of the Kadet Party“, representing nobody, and on the other we put the real dangers confronting the unity of the party in the continued, obstinate pursuit of the policy

followed by some comrades abroad, it should not be difficult for any one who holds dear the party's interests to choose the proper course. So it seems to us.

„The foregoing reasoning must make clear to representatives of the party abroad that we must pursue but one policy with regard to the attitude of the Western European and American governments — unceasing struggle against all kinds of intervention, open or camouflaged.

„The reality of the situation and the demands arising therefrom should be our sole guide in determining our tactics and policy. And if you would listen more carefully to the advice of the comrades working in Russia you would readily agree that an understanding with the Mensheviki, with an eye to coordinating the political struggle and establishing a united democratic-socialist front, is the only real problem before us, rather than coalition with „fragments of a party“ representing most unreal quantities at the present moment in Russia. The united action of the delegations of both parties abroad before the court of the international proletariat would constitute a wiser and more desirable policy in defense of the Russian Revolution abroad, regardless of the many differences that exist between our party and the Mensheviki. Such closer cooperation with the foreign delegation of the Mensheviki becomes all the more possible in proportion as the Mensheviki, acting under the influence of the stubborn facts of Russian reality and Bolshevik practice, abandon their utopian conception of the Socialist nature of the Russian Revolution in its present Bolshevik stage and their dreams of the possibility of peaceful evolution of the Kremlin dictatorship into a workers' and peasants' government.

„Such, in our opinion, are the problems confronting the party's representatives abroad. We consider it our duty to state our opinion as sharply and as emphatically as possible, in order to leave no room for ambiguity and misunderstanding. The Party of Socialists-Revolutionists never suffered from the disease of dogmatism and sectional irreconciliability. But never before

was the party so much in need of solidarity of action and unity of organization as it is now. The defeat of the Bolshevik dictatorship, which is the main task placed before us by the development of the Russian Revolution and put forward as our chief problem by the Xth congress of the party, demands the concentrated attention of all forces of the party. It demands patience and methodical effort, liquidation of all side-shows and the cessation of interrenine strife within the party. This is the unanimous demand of all comrades from the front trenches. You dare not ignore it“.

It is the authors of this letter whom the Bolsheviks dare to accuse of intriguing with the Entente, of intervention plots and of supporting the blockade of Russia! It is these people whom the Bolsheviks sentenced to death for the very same acts which the defendants so unequivocally condemned as inexcusable from the point of view of international Socialism.

Let us, however, be fair to the Bolsheviks. Let us not represent the Moscow judges as more stupid and naive than they really are. Not for their participation in the civil war, covered by the amnesty act, not for the terroristic acts and robberies carried out by Semionoff and Konopliowa, and not for the acts covered in the documents stolen in Paris did the Moscow judges condemn the Socialists-Revolutionists. No! They condemned them to death because while kept prisoners in the dock, the Socialists-Revolutionists turned the tables and indicted the whole system of Soviet absolutism before the proletariat of the world.

The declarations of the accused already cited are perhaps sufficient to give the reader an insight into their souls, but I would like to reveal them more clearly. And could this be done any better than by citing their letters, their words, their speeches.

Here is what the accused wrote to their foreign counsel on the day after the aforementioned demonstration at the Windau railway station:

„Dear Comrades:

„With heavy hearts we learned that the campaign of slander and misrepresentation raised against you by

the entire Bolshevik press has produced the inevitable result: the wild scenes which took place on your arrival in Moscow. Having greeted at one time the arrival in „red Moscow“ of the representatives of German imperialism, Mirbach and Helfferich, as marking the „victory of the revolution“, the Bolsheviki today see in the arrival of the representatives of international Socialism an insult to the Russian working class. The Russian working class is as little responsible for these disgusting excesses as it is for the policy of terrorism and violence pursued by the Bolshevik government, covering itself with the name of the workers and peasants.

„The artificial staging of the spectacle of ‚popular wrath‘, with the aid of paid agents of the Che-Ka and Communist cells, is so obvious, that it will hardly deceive even those who are but little familiar with the tactics and methods of the Bolshevik government.

„Such incidents, which will hardly prove humiliating to you, old and tried leaders of the international proletariat, can only bring indelible shame upon its organizers — the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party — and prove again before the face of the international Socialist movement that the Bolsheviki do not hesitate to use any means, however dishonest, in their struggle against their opponents. The spectacle of ‚popular wrath‘ staged by agents of the Che-Ka no more represents the real attitude of the Russian toiling masses than do the gala parades in honour of the Third Internationale bear witness to the devotion of the Russian proletariat and peasantry to the ideas of Bolshevik communism. We have grown familiar with this kind of ‚popular‘ movements under the Czarist regime, when the Czarist police staged as successfully as does the Bolshevik Che-Ka its impressive spectacles intended to emphasize the people’s loyalty and their hatred against Socialists. We, Russian Socialists, have long grown accustomed to all this.

„But the Bolshevik excesses incident to your arrival have been accompanied by something which compels even us, well familiar with the practices of the Bolshevik

government, to raise a word of warning. To the usual methods of the Communist Party — slander, falsehood and insinuation — there has now been added incitement of the street mob to lynching. For how else can you interpret the resolutions now being adopted by Communist 'cells' in the name of the workers of individual plants and factories, — resolutions demanding the murder of the members of the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists about to be tried and their counsel, the representatives of the Second and Vienna Internationales? How else can you interpret the bloodthirsty ditties specially prepared by Soviet poets for your arrival? We have no assurance that these scenes will not be reenacted on a larger scale with the opening of the trial. We, the prisoners of the Soviet Government, have long grown reconciled to the possibility of being lynched by the Che-Ka. But we do not feel justified in subjecting you, the leaders of the international proletariat, to similar danger. And if the government will not abandon immediately its persecution against you, which threatens to take the form of a lynching party, and will not cease the staging of street scenes of alleged 'popular wrath' we would rather be deprived of your defense in the coming trial than subject the international proletariat in the present bitter campaign of international capital against Socialism to the danger of losing some of its foremost chieftains.

„(Signed). A. Gotz, M. Gendelman, S. Markoff, E. Ratner, M. Vedepianin, P. Zlobin, L. Gerstein, B. Utgoff, D. Donskoy, E. Gorkoff, Dobroluboff, F. Fedorovitch, E. Timofeyeff, D. Rakoff, N. Ivanoff, E. Ivanova, A. Liberoff, M. Lichatch, N. Artemieff, B. Agapoff, A. Altovsky, B. Ivanoff, inmates of the Lefortoff Prison and members of the Central Committee of the Party of S. R.“

Their conduct at the trial was marked by the same nobility of spirit which animates this noble, courageous letter. Their appearance in „court“ was like the entrance of a group of uncompromising accusers rather than a group of defendants. Like a thunderous wave roll out the first words of Gendelman's declaration:“

„We do not recognize your court. We do not recognize it not only because of your crying violations of your own laws but principally because what we are about to witness here will be a political struggle between the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists and the Bolshevik Party, the judges in which will consist not of a neutral or nonpartisan body, or of members of other parties, freely chosen by the people, but of members of the very same Bolshevik Party, appointed by its Central Committee, and who have come here with a verdict prepared in advance by the Central Committee of Russian Bolshevik Party“.

„Your bill of indictment bristles not only with inaccuracies, which you yourselves admit, but with downright forgeries“, is the accusation hurled by Gendelman into the face of the court.

„Why did Clara Zetkin come here for, — did she come here to get the heads of the accused?“ asks Timofeyeff.

„What becomes of your promises of a free trial and free defense given at the Berlin conference of the internationales, when you prevent the appearance of eleven of our witnesses by keeping them under arrest?“ is the question of the accused.

And Lichatch hurls the following at the Court:

„We have come here only because you had promised before the face of the international proletariat, in Berlin, as well as in your press, that the trial would be free, public and open to everybody. But your perverted sense of honor, your black conscience enabled you to fill this hall with Communists mad with thirst for blood“.

„You refuse to call our witnesses because you fear them“, declares Timofeyeff, „but we invite your witnesses, we are waiting for them“.

Proud contempt for death permeates Gendelman's declaration before the court:

„From the moment we fell into your hands we were convinced that you would condemn us to death. But from these benches you will never hear any plea for mercy!“

Waters, writing in the Brussels „Peuple“, thus described the accused in the Moscow trial:

„They are sitting behind us. They are triumphant! Their actions are being discussed publicly! They proudly accept full responsibility for all they have done.

„The first to speak is Gendelman. He begins with a sharp attack:

„We do not recognize your court. It has been ordered to convict us. It derives its authority from a government akin to the government of the 18th Brumaire, which was composed of convicted criminals, bums, alleged students, prostitutes and journalists for sale“.

„Timofeyeff follows:

„We have not come here to save our heads — they belong to the Revolution. We will never surrender our right to revolution, for this right is the holy heritage of the French Revolution and the unwritten law of every Socialist party“.

„Here is Lichatch, complete master of himself, waiting calmly for the mob to cease yelling. Here is Gotz, this leader of clear mind, greeted with insults by the mob. Here is Berg, a plain workman, who in reply to the question: „are you guilty?“ says: „yes, I am guilty before the revolution of not fighting hard enough to destroy your rotten dictatorship“.

„They should all be quoted, for they are all of the same courage and manhood.

„Wednesday, June 14th. The accused have requested us to withdraw from the defense. It is a painful moment. We are parting from them. We embrace them all, these twenty-two heads, over which there hovers a grave threat. The strains of the „Internationale“ are heard, melancholy, heart-rending. We leave quite shattered“.

All despots like to chop off heads that will not bend. Under Nicholas Romanoff these people pined in Siberian dungeons. Under Lenine, they are sentenced to death.

VIII.

The Verdict.

After the examination of witnesses, the prosecutors took the floor. The only one of them who tried to draw the line between his function and that of a Che-Ka agent was Sadul. He attacked the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists but did not demand the heads of the accused. The others, from Lunacharsky to Clara Zetkin, while not offering to execute the accused themselves, evinced their eagerness to prepare the rope. The most bloodthirsty speech was Krilenko's.

The accused were then given the floor. Timofeyeff concluded his speech as follows:

„There is no common ground between us. We remain what we were“.

And Gotz, confirming this, declared:

„We were and will always remain Socialists“.

With his usual calm, he added:

„I have not been able all these years to give my party an account of my stewardship. Let my remarks from this platform, therefore, serve as a testament to those who remain. If we must die we will meet death without fear, but if we remain among the living we will, after our release, continue to wage our fight against you as we have done in the past“.

The prosecutor was again given the floor. Discussing the verdict he said that it was clearly determined by the declaration of Gotz, Gendelman and Timofeyeff, who declared that as long as they remained alive they would do what they had done before and that it was useless to expect from them either a change of tactics or plea for mercy. „What is there left for us to do after such declarations?“ asked the prosecutor. „What do we see when we look into the past? Rebellion and blood in Petrograd. The October uprising in Moscow and blood. In Archangel — blood. In Samara and in Siberia — blood. In Tamboff and recently in Kronstadt — blood. Therefore, I say quite calmly: blood must flow here in order that it may not flow again, or at least not in such measure.“



G. Gorkov - Г. Горьков



A. Libegov - А. Либеров



M. A. Védénarine
М.А.Веденяпин



F. F. Fedorovitch
Ф.Ф.Федорович



E. Berg - Е. Берг



S. T. Rakov - Л. Ф. Раков

Thus spoke the hangmen of Versailles in their wholesale executions of the Communards. Thus spoke Horthy and Denikin.

But we have learned already that the Bolsheviki are not satisfied with mere murder. They seek also the „moral annihilation“ of their opponents. With this purpose in mind, the prosecution's demand for the execution of the accused was followed by a proposal that the accused repent and disavow their party. They were offered their lives and their freedom and they rejected the proposal with contempt.

Timofeyeff replied:

„The State Prosecutors Lunacharsky and Krilenko who pressed the indictment against us on all counts, not being sure themselves of our guilt, have deemed it necessary, in order to lighten their task, to request us to repent and disavow our past activity. I have been delegated by the defendants of the first group to make the following declaration in reply to this proposal before the court and prosecution: There can be no question of repentance or disavowal. From these benches you will never hear anything like that. As we have stood before so will we continue to stand in the future, and in this regard we will always remain, so far as you are concerned, unrepentant opponents.“

Unsatisfied with this declaration, the court in withdrawing for discussion of the verdict, again addressed the defendants of the first group, asking them to state what their attitude toward the Soviet Government would be if they should be acquitted and given their liberty.

Timofeyeff replied:

„We stick to the unalterable position expressed by every one of us individually during the interrogation at the preceding sessions“.

On August 7, the court rendered its verdict:

A) Twelve of the defendants to be executed: Gotz, Donskoy, Gerstein, Gendelman, Lichatch, Nikolai Ivanoff, Eugenia Ratner, Timofeyeff, Morozoff, Agapoff, Helen Ivanova, Altovsky.

B) Imprisonement from 2 to 10 years: Zobin, Utgoff, Berg, Lvoff, Liberoff, Artemieff, Rakoff, Fedorovitch, Vede-
pianin.

C) For the traitors — Acquital.

This verdict was submitted in this form for the examination of the conference of the Bolshevist Party, then in session at Moscow. Here the members of the Soviet Government (with the exception of Trotzky), part of the praesidium of the Central Executive Committee, members of the conference from the provinces, and heads of Soviet bureaus and embassies abroad, urged the verdict to be commuted to permanent exile of the condemned outside the confines of the R S F S R. The group composed of Trotzky, Stalin and Bucharin, opposing this suggestion, proposed that the condemned be given 24 hours to sign an undertaking promising to abandon forever all resistance to the Soviet Government, resign from their party and cease all relations with any of its members. In event of their assent to this proposal the sentences of the condemned to death were to be commuted to five years, exile at hard labor to Northenn provinces, while those sentenced to imprisonment were to be sent to concentration camps for one year. In event of refusal, the verdict was to be executed at once.

After stormy discussion the conference accepted a compromise proposed by Kameneff: the verdict is to be made conditional and is not to be executed if the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists abandons all active opposition to the Soviet Government, in Russia and abroad.

The verdict was confirmed in this form and made public by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Its final form shows how little the Bolsheviki are inclined to let their prey out of their hands:

„With regard to those twelve of the defendants sentenced to the extreme measure of punishment, the Central Executive Committee decides: the verdict is confirmed but its execution is postponed.

„The verdict will not be executed if the Party of Socialists-Revolutionists actually abandons all underground, conspiratory, terroristic, and rebel activity, as